

[Buffalo Valley]

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Page I Interview(?) [???

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APR 5 1937

Mrs. A. M. Hodges

710 Words

Buffalo Valley

When Rufus and Mary F. Boyce reached Buffalo valley in the spring of 1908 it was an attractive looking place, but seemed very lonely tho' there were several settlers there before them. Their son Mark had gone there the year before and had some plowing done on his homestead. Alfred Jay had been there since 1902 and John S. Matt, Jesse Bean, the Bonine family, and a confederate soldier, Fearnot, were there.

Mr. Boyce put in the first pump in the river in the valley that Spring. High water washed it out and he replaced it. He put down a well but the water was too brackish for use. As they didn't want to drink river water they hauled water for house use from Hagerman, six miles when they could ford the river and twelve miles when they must go by the bridge. The line between the school district and the Lake Arthur district passes thru the valley and the nearest school was in [?]. Here was no church and the risks in going to church in [?] is illustrated in this story told by young Mary Boyce:

"We youngsters mere going to church in Hagerman. We started about 5:30. The river was up so [e?] but as it was only six and a quarter miles this way and twelve by the bridge we

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risked it and got across all right. Then it began to rain and how it did rain. We came to an adobe house [and?] went in until the rain was over, then we went on, reaching Hagerman about eleven o'clock, with nothing to do but get home again. [We?] dared not risk the ford so we went on the [?] [?] [?] after crossing it that, we started winding around mesquite bumps. It was so dark that we could not see the road and one of the boys got out and walked ahead but we got lost. About four o'clock in the morning we came to a fence and knew where we were. We got home at about 4:30 o'clock in the morning."

The water dogs (a species of lizard that infest damp places) made the nights vocal with their booming. The saltgrass grew knee high and was out in late summer for winter feed.

In 1912 Carl, Ray and Bruce bought out the [Boyces?] except Mark's homestead. Another son, Allen had taken a homestead. They got from land commissioner, James A. French, the water right to cover 840 acres.

In 1912 James Miller installed a pump about two and a half miles below this pump. He also had his pump washed out by high water and replaced it. While Miller owned this location he lived there. He sold to a Roswell company, ex-sheriff Young, Judge McClure and Harry Maynard. Of these, Young lived there a while. This water right covers 1300 acres. Down the valley about two miles was the Parks spring where good water could be obtained for house use. This spring was across the river from the Pilkey spring which was a noted place for round-up camps and for people travelling up and down the valley. This lower settlement was in the Lake Arthur school district and in the summer of 1921 a schoolhouse was [built?] here and Miss Grace Harvey taught the 1921 [?] term of school there, with an enrollment of 23 and an average attendance of 15, some of whom came from cattle ranches in the adjoining hills. Wade Lane taught the 22-23 term. Then the schools III were consolidated and a bus was run from Lake Arthur to pick up the children. This is all the schooling they ever had and they have never had any church. The only social gathering was an occasional dance. Now In 1937 Mrs. Gilroy owns, lives on, and

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manages the upper ranch and Jack Sweat manages the lower ranch, lives in Hagerman and works Mexicans who occupy the tenant houses.

tho' generally cattle ranges are not dangerous, occasionally when the cowboys and the settlers got into a dispute over grass, guns were flourished.

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SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Mrs. John Lane

Grace Harvey

Jack Sweat

Mrs Cassie Mason

(Mary Boyce)